

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 1. A system for producing a postcard capable of playing back a customized message, said
2 system comprising:

3 a recording unit comprising:

4 a microphone recording a message onto said postcard;

5 a slot accommodating said postcard;

6 a plurality of electrical connectors forming an electrical contact to said postcard; and

7 a record button to activate said microphone to allow said postcard to be recorded; and

8 a postcard capable of playing back a recorded message, said postcard comprising:

9 a memory storing an audio message;

10 a playback button to play said audio message stored in said memory;

11 a speaker for converting said audio message from said memory into audible sound

12 a battery energizing said postcard and said recording unit; and

13 an audio board having an IC voice synthesizer chip attached thereto, said audio board

14 being electrically connected to said recording unit when said postcard is inserted into said
15 recording unit.

1 2. The system of claim 1, said recording unit further comprising an LED that turns on when
2 said microphone is activated.

1 3. The system of claim 1, said memory being an EEPROM.

1 4. The system of claim 3, said EEPROM being automatically overwritten by a subsequently
2 recorded message.

1 5. The system of claim 1, said postcard being 5.5 mm thick and capable of being mailed
2 through the postal service.

1 6. The system of claim 1, said recording unit being absent a power supply when said
2 postcard is not electrically connected to said recording unit.

1 7. The system of claim 1, said recording unit having a width less than 7.25 inches and a
2 height of not more than 4 inches.

1 8. The system of claim 1, said postcard having a plurality of guide slots to mate with
2 corresponding ones of a plurality of guide pins on said recording unit so that a plurality of electrical
3 fingers emanating from said audio board of said postcard mate with corresponding ones of said
4 plurality of electrical connectors on said recording unit.

1 9. A method for recording a customized message on a recordable postcard, said method
2 comprising the steps of:

3 inserting said postcard having a thickness less than or equal to 5.5 mm into a slot of a
4 recording unit, said postcard forming electrical contact with said recording unit;

5 depressing a record button on said recording unit activating a microphone on said recording
6 unit; and

7 recording a first message onto said postcard by talking into a microphone disposed on said
8 recording unit.

1 10. The method of claim 9, further comprising the steps of:

2 pressing a playback button on said postcard immediately after said recording step to listen
3 to said first message stored in a memory on said postcard; and

4 recording a second message onto said card by pressing said record button on said recording
5 unit.

1 11. The method of claim 10, said second message overwrites said first message in said
2 memory on said postcard.

1 12. The method of claim 9, further comprising the steps of:

2 pressing a playback button on said postcard immediately after said recording step to listen
3 to said first message stored in a memory on said postcard; and

4 removing said postcard from said recording unit if a user deems said first message is
5 satisfactory.

1 13. The method of claim 11, further comprising the steps of:

2 pressing a playback button on said postcard immediately after said recording step to listen
3 to said second message stored in a memory on said postcard; and
4 removing said postcard from said recording unit if a user deems said second message is
5 satisfactory.

1 14. A postcard capable of playing an audio message recorded from a recording unit, said
2 postcard comprising:

3 batteries for energizing said postcard during play-back of said audio message and energizing
4 said recording unit during recording of said audio message;

5 a voice synthesizer;

6 a memory storing said audio message;

7 a plurality of electrical pin sockets that electrically attach to a recording unit;

8 a speaker for producing audio signals based of said audio message stored in said memory;

9 and

10 a playback button that takes said audio message stored in said memory and produces audio
11 sound by said speaker, said postcard being less than 5.5 mm thick and having a length less than 6
12 inches and a height less than 4 inches and a weight less than 1.5 ounces.

1 15. The postcard of claim 14, said batteries, said voice synthesizer, said memory, said

2 speaker, said playback button and said plurality of electrical pin sockets all being disposed on a
3 printed circuit board (PCB) having a length less than 90 mm and a height less than 50mm.

1 16. The postcard of claim 15, said PCB being encased with plastic, both sides of said
2 postcard being covered with vinyl enabling a user to write messages on both sides of said postcard.

1 17. The postcard of claim 15, said memory being an EEPROM memory, said memory being
2 overwritten each time a user records a new message, said EEPROM memory capable of storing
3 audio messages having a duration of 20 seconds..

1 18. The postcard of claim 14, said memory being stored in a voice synthesizer IC chip, said
2 memory enabling a user to record an audio message of 20 seconds, said postcard further comprising
3 a printed circuit board having said voice synthesizer chip embedded therein, said playback button,
4 said speaker and said batteries being disposed on said postcard away from said PCB, said speaker,
5 said playback button and said batteries being electrically connected to said PCB.

1 19. A portable system producing audio messages on a postcard not more than 5.5 mm thick,
2 said system comprising:

3 said postcard having a thickness not to exceed 5.5 mm, said postcard comprising:

4 a memory storing up to 20 seconds of an audio message;

5 a voice synthesizer chip connected to said memory;

6 a battery electrically connected to energize said system;
7 a speaker for converting electrical signals into audible sound electrically connected
8 to said voice synthesizer;
9 a plurality of electrical connectors disposed on an edge of said postcard to form
10 electrical connection to a recording unit from electrical components in said postcard;
11 said recording unit having a weight less than one-half of one pound, said recording unit
12 electrically attaches to said postcard when said postcard is inserted into said recording unit, said
13 recording unit comprising;
14 a microphone for storing audio sound into said memory;
15 a recording button enabling said microphone when pressed.

1 20. The system of claim 19, said voice synthesizer, said memory and said plurality of
2 electrical connectors being disposed on a printed circuit board having a dimension not to exceed 40
3 mm long and 35 mm high, said speaker, said playback button and said battery being disposed on said
4 postcard at a distance from said PCB but being electrically connected to said PCB.

1 21. The system of claim 19, said voice synthesizer, said memory, said plurality of electrical
2 connectors, said speaker, said playback button and said battery all being disposed on a PCB having
3 a length not to exceed 90 mm and a height not to exceed 50mm.

1 22. The system of claim 19, said microphone being an electret microphone.

1 23. The system of claim 19, said system being absent a microprocessor, a central processing
2 unit or a microcontroller.

1 24. The system of claim 19, said recording unit being powered by said battery disposed in
2 said postcard when said postcard is electrically connected to said recording unit.

1 25. The system of claim 19, said postcard being 4 inches by 6 inches and said postcard being
2 1.35 ounces in weight.

1 26. The system of claim 19, said memory being an EEPROM wherein each recording
2 overwrites any previous recording stored in said EEPROM.

1 27. The system of claim 19, said recording unit being less than 7.25 inches long, 4 inches
2 high and less than 3 inches thick, said postcard being 4 inches by 6 inches.

1 28. The system of claim 194, said recording unit having an LED that lights up during
2 recodation of an audio message.

1 29. The system of claim 19, said battery being a pair of Lithium Ion 3 volt batteries being
2 disposed in series.

1 30. The system of claim 20, said postcard being covered by vinyl enabling a user to write
2 on both sides of said postcard.

1 31. The system of claim 21, said postcard being covered by vinyl enabling a user to write
2 on both sides of said postcard.